

REMARKS

There are now pending in this application claims 1-30, of which claims 1, 11, 16, and 26 are independent. Claims 18-30 are newly added. No claims have been cancelled.

Claims 1-6, 8, and 10-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. Applicants have amended the claims as appropriate to address each of the grounds of rejection and have also sought to improve the clarity of the claims. Withdrawal of the rejections under § 112 is respectfully sought.

In the above amendments, Applicants have also amended claims 7 and 9, which claims have been withdrawn from consideration. Each of these claims is dependent ultimately upon claim 1 and with the amendments it is respectfully submitted that such claims should more appropriately and expeditiously be rejoined with the present application.

Claims 1-6, 8, and 10-17 were identified as being allowable over the prior art of record once the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, were addressed. Applicants submit that such rejections have been addressed and for reasons explained below, the amendments made and newly presented claims do not alter the allowability of this application.

Independent claim 1 has been amended primarily to address the rejection under § 112 and Applicants respectfully submit that none of the amendments thereto in any way affect the allowability of that claim.

Independent claim 11 is merely pre-existing dependent claim 11 rewritten into independent form. Consequently, Applicants submit that independent claim 11 is allowable for reasons noted in the outstanding Official Action.

Dependent claim 16 has also been rewritten into independent form and incorporates all of the subject matter at least that existed in claim 1. As such, independent claim 16 is also allowable over the art of record and in condition for allowance.

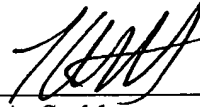
Independent claim 26 is a new claim, but corresponds to dependent claim 17 rewritten into independent form. As such, independent claim 26 is also believed to be in condition for allowance.

The remaining claims in the above application are dependent claims which depend either directly or indirectly from one of the above-discussed independent claims and are therefore patentable over the art of record for reasons noted above with respect to the independent claims. In addition, each recite features of the invention still further distinguishing them from the applied art. Favorable and independent consideration thereof is respectfully sought.

Applicants respectfully submit that all outstanding matters in the above application have been addressed and that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the above application are respectfully sought.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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